THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) to (e) Do not arise.

India's plan in weapons market

†773. SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is making any effort for securing its own place in the vast weapons market of the world;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c)Yes, Sir. The Ordnance Factory Board and Defence Public Sector Undertakings have been exporting some of their products for several years after meeting domestic requirements. The steps taken to promote exports include - participation in international defence exhibitions, organising biennial international exhibitions namely DEFEXPO and AERO INDIA, distribution of Catalogues and CDs on Indian Defence Products through Indian Embassies, mobilizing involvement of India's Missions abroad in procuring orders for export and pursuing trade enquiries and interaction with foreign delegates/visitors.

Agreement with Russia for manufacture of high-tech defence equipments

774. SHRI CHO S. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that our country has signed an agreement with Russia recently for manufacture of high-tech defence equipments;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what will be the mode of payment for technology transfers; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) whether it will be adjusted under the barter trade in rupee payment or foreign exchange will be given as payment?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Recently India has not signed any agreement with Russia for manufacture of high-tech defence equipment.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Construction of ordnance factory at Rajgir, Bihar

†775. SHRI GAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the status of the ordnance factory being constructed at Rajgir in Bihar; and

(b) by when the production is likely to begin there alongwith complete details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES):(a) Land acquisition work has been almost completed by taking over possession of nearly 2700 acres of land out of a total identified area of 2966 acres. The infrastructure works have begun and an expenditure of nearly Rs. 80 crores has been incurred.

(b) Production is scheduled to begin by November, 2005. The factory, when fully commissioned, would produce 2 lakh modules of Bi-Modular Charges per annum. This propellant is suitable for high calibre ammunitions. The technology is being acquired from a South African firm.

Indigenous production of Bofors guns

776. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India plans to produce Bofors guns indigenously;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when production will start?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.